Rural Women's Role in the "Great
The Women's Institutes in

BY MARGARET KECHNIE

In promoting clean homes the Women's Institutes spread its own brand of social purity as it attempted to teach women the benefits of applying science to homemaking.

Cet article explore les idéaux de l'organisation rurale ontarienne "Women's Institutes" qui datent depuis 1897 en partant du rôle des femmes comme mères et femmes au foyer et leur influence sur la construction de la nation canadienne.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close a women's group emerged in rural Ontario calling itself the Women's Institutes. As the organization struggled to find a foothold among farm women in the years immediately after it was founded in 1897 it would have been absurd to suggest that in just two decades the Women's Institutes would become the largest farm organization in Ontario. In fact, when the 900 branches of the Women's Institutes federated in 1919 as the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario it claimed 30,000 members; at its height in the 1950s its membership numbered almost fifty thousand women (Ambrose and Kechnie). Not only did the Women's Institutes became the jewel of the state-sponsored Ontario farm movement but as the notion of organizing farm women spread to other provinces a national organization, the Federation of Women's Institutes of Canada, was formed. Similar state-sponsored farm women's organizations patterned after those in Canada spread to countries around the world and in 1933 these groups formed The Associated Country Women of the World. Thus, the Women's Institutes which began in Ontario in 1897 can claim the distinction of being the only international women's organization that began in Canada and spread around the world.

Like many of the myriad of reform movements active in Canada in the early twentieth century dedicated to raising the moral and spiritual tone of the country through the promotion of middle-class British Protestant values, the Women's Institutes undertook a similar task in rural Ontario. In promoting clean homes the Women's Institutes spread its own brand of social purity as it attempted to teach women the benefits of applying science to homemaking. In the view of the women who came to dominate the leadership of the Women's Institutes, such as the wives of wealthy farmers, and those of professional men living in small town Ontario, along with the professional women hired by the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) and the Ontario Department of Agriculture, the home, the special sphere of women, was central to building a strong nation. The home was the place where children particularly would learn to develop character, or self control, and thus lead lives that were morally pure and physically strong. For example, Dr. Annie Backus, a popular Women's Institute speaker claimed in an address entitled "The Effect of Home Influence upon Our National and Political Life,"

> ... parentage is a sacred duty, not an idle holiday, and all the world is realizing that Home means as much to the nation as the individual, for it is in the home that all national greatness is founded, and the influence [of the home] upon the national life is so far reaching that not a monument can be placed in a public park or a vote be given in our houses of Parliament that cannot be traced back to the ideals, [and] the traditions of home and childhood. (73)

This paper will look at the ideas of the Women's Institutes as they pertained to rural women's contribution to "nation-building," a process that involved recreating notions of class, race, gender, and religious superiority to which British Canadians were committed in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The ideas of the organization will be set within the context of the philosophy of idealism promoted by the Ontario Agricultural College and will consider how the agrarian myth informed reform activities. The philosophy underlying the scope of the Women's Institutes must also be seen as a part of the urban reform movement, and as such, particular attention will be paid to the efforts of the Women's Institutes to teach farm women the urgency of improving farm homes by applying the principles inherent in the new discipline of domestic science and by encouraging farm women to purchase the latest in home technologies. Although rural reformers found much to object to, if not fear, in the crowded cities of urban Ontario, they admired the way urban women adapted to the technological advances available for the home. In an attempt to make farm home and thus farm life more appealing, thereby keeping people on the land, rural reformers campaigned through the Women's Institutes for more efficiency in the home,

National Work of Home Building"

Early Twentieth Century Ontario

arguing that it would lighten women's domestic work load and give them more time for leisure activities. The belief that the farm home was essential for national greatness was a central tenent of the Women's Institutes. Many rural reformers were convinced that the development of both "character" as well as other attributes considered necessary for national leadership such as honesty, integrity, and self-reliance could only be developed as people struggled on the land. As immigrants flooded into the burgeoning cities of Ontario and industrial production threatened to overshadow the importance of agriculture to the Ontario economy, agrarian reformers feared the breakdown of rural society and thus, the nation as a whole.

The Women's Institutes was founded at a time when many educated Canadians were interested in reforming their society and in establishing for the new country a framework that would lead to future prosperity and one in which the nation could take its place within the broader context of the British Empire. The desire to strengthen Canadian national identify grew in the face of what many viewed as rampant industrialization and urbanization. For reformers the task was to impose order on urban growth and stave off (presumed) impending chaos. The commonly held view was that the consequences of industrial development and burgeoning cities spelled crime, disease, and sexual immorality. In valuing all things British, those who struggled to regenerate Canada in the early years of the new century were, in fact, attempting to re-create Britain in Canada by promoting its form of government and way of life. They believed that by accentuating the superiority of white, middle-class, protestant values the new country could achieve the attributes necessary to assume its responsibilities in the Empire. As Daniel Frances states in *National Dreams: Myth, Memory and Canadian History*, British Canadians demonstrated a superiority which placed beyond the pale anyone who was not English speaking, fair skinned, and devoutly Christian (79). As a movement to reform rural Ontario, the leadership of the Women's Institutes, in affirming their own racial confidence, reflected the values promoted by Canadians of British heritage. It is not that immigrants were unwelcome. In fact, they provided markets for food produced on farms and cheap labour for factories, but they were expected to take every advantage possible to assimilate themselves and to be grateful for the opportunities given them by British Canadians (84).

In Ontario it was the teaching staff at the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) who stood at the forefront of efforts to improve rural life. An agricultural education was intended to equip young men to become successful farmers and skillful leaders. These leadership skills would be achieved not only through the study of the scientific foundations of agriculture but also by reading literature, history, current affairs, and, above all, by applying Christian principles to their daily lives (Nesmith 1988: 169).

Rural reformers believed that the women and men who worked Ontario's farms failed to understand the importance of applying science to all aspects of farm work.

With the founding of the Farmers' Institutes in 1882, and later the Women's Institutes, the farm leadership attempted to extend the high ideals expected of OAC students to practicing farmers and their wives through continuing education. Rural reformers targeted the farm population because they believed that the women and men who worked Ontario's farms failed to understand the importance of applying science to all aspects of farm work. Even before the founding of the Women's Institutes, those attending Farmers' Institute meetings were told that science was not just to be applied to work done by male farmers but woman were expected to learn how to rescue science "from the exclusion of the laboratory and experimental station and put it where it belongs in the home" (Carpenter 282).

The notion that lives could be lived "scientifically" grew out of the OAC and the idealism it espoused. Idealism embodied the notion that by developing one's moral and intellectual capacities, a depth of awareness could be reached which would allow individuals to grasp and thus overcome complex agricultural, social, and economic problems needed to develop a truly great nation. In embracing idealism the OAC accepted the role of providing a social vision for rural life in Ontario. This vision, known as agrarian nationalism, was intended to revitalize rural areas ravaged by declining population and a lingering depression. In the view of the OAC a scientific agricultural education would provide a stronghold against the erosion of those rural values deemed essential to the regional leadership Ontario must provide if Canada was to achieve

national greatness in the eyes of Britain and the wider world. The creation of the various educational institutions in Ontario such as the OAC, the Farmers' Institutes, and the Women's Institutes, under the auspices of the Ontario Department of Agriculture, are tangible evidence of the influence of agrarian nationalism in Ontario, and of the Ontario government's support for the ideals it advanced.

Those who embraced idealism and the nationalism it embodied tended to view the world through the agrarian myth. Central to this myth was the idea that a nation founded on values inherent in the countryside was the only way to protect civilization from encroaching industrialization (Nesmith 1988: 169). Agrarian reformers argued that the countryside would always be the cradle of essential social values and "the moulder of national and personal character" (Jones 96). The idea that "the yeomen of the country are the bulwark of the nation, and their sterling character the greatest asset of the state" (*The Farmer's Advocate* 758) inspired much of what they wrote. Agrarian idealism, as expressed within the educational institutions established by the Ontario Department of Agriculture, firmly believed that agriculture was the most important calling since the whole structure of society rested on this one institution and "[farming] is ... destined to become the greatest of all sciences and the ideal farmer the greatest of all scientists ... " (Way 29). Speaking at a Women's Institute convention in 1907, Mrs. J. W. Bates claimed that,

Agrarian reformers argued the countryside would always be the cradle of essential social values and "the moulder of national and personal character."

> influence, education and opportunity are the principal factors in the broadening and expanding of liberality and equality amongst the leading people, the farmers. Farmers are the solid men of the country ... [their wives] are the purest women of the nation. (53)

Like all myths the agrarian myth expressed, at least to some degree, important truths. But myths also idealize (Frances). In the early part of the twentieth century the agrarian myth romanticized the role that the countryside played in Canadian history and economic development. Daniel Frances argues that myths "select particular events and institutions which seem to embody important cultural values and elevate them to the status of legend. Myths are echoes of the past, resonating in the present" (11).

The agrarian myth thus served a particular purpose. At a time when Ontario farming was going through a period of rapid change and uncertainty, the agrarian myth allowed rural residents to believe that their choice to stay on the land was a noble one. The importance of farming rested on the belief that producing food is the most important task a country undertakes. As long as the belief that honest, hardworking, British men and women populated the land, each doing the work necessary to feed the country and raise the next generation of strong sturdy farmers, the rising numbers of immigrants could be tolerated. Factories may be important, and immigrants were a fact of life but nation-building with all that that implied would go forward so long as the values inherent in the agrarian myth continued.

In fact, for those who believed in the agrarian myth there was the conviction that the influence of the agricultural sectors of the country were being diminished as the demographics of the country shifted. Concern over declining rural population and the impact this would have on national life is evident in John MacDougall's *Rural Life in Canada* published in 1911. MacDougall claimed that generations of the rural population had provided the country with its national leaders. He further argued that 85 per cent of those listed in *Who's Who in Canada* and 99 per cent of the ministers of the gospel had been born in rural areas. Declining rural population was particularly noticeable among women. MacDougall claimed that "in only 40 out of 920 townships do females outnumber males" (39). Some rural reformers not only noticed the lack of women in the Ontario countryside but also blamed them for the exodus of people from the farms to the cities. "I am quite convinced," said one man, "that in almost every case where ... a farmer moves to town the wife is really the cause of his going" (*Farm and Dairy* 870). Another argued that " ... women are the largest factor in the whole puzzling equation" (Hatch 5). There was a profound sense that if women continued to turn their backs on the countryside, vital national leadership would be lost as well as "the finest Christian civilization in the country" (MacDougall 213).

As rural reformers worked to change rural Ontario and to bolster the belief in the rural myth, Women's Institute leaders became a part of the process taking place in Canada called "nation-building" that was informed with class, race, gender, and religious specificity. As the Women's Institutes leadership in Ontario promoted white, middle-class, British-protestant values they were confirming their own status by promoting cultural superiority. As Mariana Valverde has argued, the leadership of the Women's Institutes "sought to organize gender, not merely utilize it" (29). In attempting the gendering of rural communities in the first two decades of the twentieth century the middle-class women who dominated the leadership of the Women's Institutes, assumed the role of "experts"; other women, particularly the wives of male farmers became the targets of their reform activities.

In an attempt to keep women in the countryside, and thus as a vital force in country homes, reformers active in

the Farmers' Institutes, and later the Women's Institutes, concentrated on impressing on women the importance of their contribution to rural society and thus to nation-building. Women, it was argued, were responsible for the most significant institution in the country, the rural home. From the first call to organize Ontario's rural women, Women's Institute lecturers addressed the centrality of women's work (Ambrose). The motto of the Women's Institutes, "For Home and Country," was heralded as the principle that should guide women's lives. "Have you ever been impressed by anything peculiar in the wording of that phrase?" asked Miss Mary Bell of St. George:

> [the] home is placed first. The most important institution in our social system—in the universe, in fact, is the Home. It is even more important than the church or the school. What the numberless springs are to the river, the homes are to the nation ... ; just as the water of the river is pure or impure according to its source and the soil over which it has travelled, so the quality of the national life is determined by the character of the home from which it draws its chief supply. If these are defiled, the whole nation is contaminated. (103)

For the women who spoke on behalf of the Women's Institutes, women who failed to do their duty as wives and mothers had the potential to currupt the nation. Laura Rose, a leading Women's Institutes speaker, expressed her disappointment in mothers who allowed their daughters to be educated in the city where their attention would be diverted away from homemaking. Schooling in the city would expose young women to a way of life that would encourage them to take up employment outside the home in urban centres. Guarding against any influence that might challenge values inherent in "national-building" was a concern to Women's Institutes leaders. For example, Mary Urie Watson, the first principal of Macdonald Institute, the school of domestic science that opened on the campus of the OAC in 1903, after conferring with the President of the OAC, rejected the application of a Catholic women, with excellent references, even though she was desperate for staff. No doubt they feared the negative influence a Catholic teacher might have on the student body, but they would also have been concerned about what parents would do if they knew a Catholic was on the faculty of Macdonald Institute (Kechnie). While the farm home was seen as the first line of defense against the erosion of national greatness, the leadership of the Women's Institutes were also interested in alerting farm women to the heavy responsibility they bore as mothers. Annie Backus claimed that:

> study shows that national history is written at the fire side by our mothers; and if our national history is mean and contemptible, it is because our mothers are weak and thoughtless, and if it is brave and just, it is because our mothers are patriotic and thoughtful.... (72)

Agrarian idealists, motivated to improve rural homes, found common cause with the domestic science movement emerging in Ontario at the turn of the century. If male farmers were to be taught the importance of a scientific approach to work on the farm, how much more important was it for women to be taught the "science" of homemaking? Many rural reformers spoke out about the fact that the appearance of rural homes did little to keep people in or attract anyone to the countryside. Many writers, both women and men, complained about the backward conditions of the farm home many of which were without even the basic amenities, such as running water. One man said that no one should be surprised that people flee from agriculture "as from a raging pestilence" (Holmes 117). Blanch Maddock, an instructor in dairying at the OAC and a strong supporter of the new discipline of domestic science, claimed that as homemakers, country women have fallen far short of what they ought to be as wives and mothers and thus, are in need of the instruction in homemaking offered through the Women's Institutes. She and other reformers argued that farm women had allowed themselves to become miserable, broken-down wrecks by assuming a burden of work that was out of keeping with the image of the cultural superiority that rural reformers were anxious to foster among farm women.

"The most important institution in our social system—in the universe, in fact, is the Home. It is even more important than the church or the school."

Some rural reformers were particularly critical of farm women's income-producing work. They argued that women's work in the dairy, raising poultry, and doing field work diminished the time they could spend in the home and threatened their health. Maddock claimed that "the great weakness with the really busy woman to-day is, she forgets that she cannot continually make demands on her reserve strength without suffering from it sooner or later" (142). Urban feminists advocated the "family wage" which would see the male breadwinner earn enough to support both himself and his family (Prentice *et al.* 121). In a less overt way leaders of the Women's Institutes advocated the notion of the "family wage" for the rural family. Rose, also an OAC dairy instructor, argued that in an age of mechanization all aspects of dairy work, particularly butter making, a common way in which farm women earned income for the family in early twentieth century Ontario, was best left to men, machines and modern creameries. In her

widely used textbook, *Farm Dairying*, published in 1911, Rose lamented the withdrawal of women from dairying but saw it as necessary to improve the international reputation of Canadian dairy products. In her view it was not women's expertise as butter makers that would be missed. Rather, it was the fact that women were naturally more patient, kinder to animals and cleaner than men were in the dairy. In fact, Rose saw no role for farm women in commercial life of the farm. For her, women's role was in the home and their contribution to agrarian nationalism was to produce a strong healthy farm population and to support the work of male farmers. To this end women should rationalize their work and economize their strength by becoming efficient homemakers striving for "plainer living and higher thinking" (1897-98: 270).

The leadership of the Women's Institutes, like many middle-class female reformers of the day active in the women's movement, saw the ideal woman as the "new" housewife.

Thus while some middle-class women were challenging traditional notions about women's proper place and even making advances in the areas of paid employment and education, the leadership of the Women's Institutes, like many middle-class female reformers of the day active in the turn of the century women's movement, saw the ideal woman as the "new" housewife. The nation would never be strong without dedicated women who were aware of their place in the rural home and supporting male leaders in agriculture. Women's Institute leaders, particularly those associated with the Ontario Department of Agriculture, saw women and men as having distinctly different attributes and insisted on a strict definition of separate spheres even in a community where such division for some families was unrealistic. Dr. Annie Backus supported separate spheres by saying:

> Our fathers give us our physical strength, our mechanical skill, our musical talent, our mothers supplying our spiritual integrity and mental ability. It is also the father's privilege to furnish the means for physical necessities of wife and children. It is the wife's and mother's privilege to see that the means is wisely used. (74)

In an attempt to instill in women the need to concentrate their efforts on the home and on domestic work, the Women's Institutes encouraged their branches located throughout Ontario to use the expertise of OAC instructors (such as Rose and Maddock) and to tap the resources of Macdonald Institute. With the support of the Department of Agriculture and the OAC, Rose and Maddock, and other domestic science "experts," went about the countryside giving talks and demonstrations on various aspects of homemaking to rural women. Primarily their aim was to teach the principles of scientific homemaking. Secondarily they were to encourage the development of Women's Institute branches that were intended to continue spreading the gospel of scientific homemaking among farm women. These women insisted that homemaking was as important a profession as a bank manager, a coal miner, or a school teacher. Women were encouraged to write to Macdonald Institute for information on domestic issues so that women could prepare talks on homemaking at local Women's Institute meetings (Watson 1905a; 1905b). In this way members of the Women's Institutes became homemaking "experts" in their own right. Such women were told that they should send their daughters to Macdonald Institute so that they would come to understand that as future homemakers they would have the responsibility "to lay a safe and sure foundation of this great nation to rest upon" (Maddock 150). Like male idealists who saw their work to retain the province's agricultural base as an act of Christian faith and God-given responsibility, so too did women reformers dedicate themselves to revitalizing farm homes:

> sound the trumpet loud and long ... [our work is] to help along the reforms of the day, as well as prove ourselves willing cheerful co-workers in anything and everything which tends to brighten home life.... Where shall we place our housewife? Behind the home; the foundation of the universe.... Shun not the struggle; it is our work; it is God's plan. (Beck 47)

Reformers argued that if women were to stay in the countryside and if people were to be drawn away from urban centres to the countryside, farm homes must be improved. Reformers justified their lobbying efforts by saying that,

> there can be no pleasure to the memory of a household drudge, no pleasure in recalling a work-worn woman, indifferent to the great world about her, a slave who thought only for her husband's and children's physical welfare. (Nodwell 85)

Similar to the way the rural press condemned farm women for the declining rural population, reformers tended to censure them for the backwardness of farm homes. They pointed to the fact that farmers readily applied new technology to crop production and questioned why women had not taken advantage of similar technological advances for the home. Rose's explanation was that farm women "were more saving of the pennies" than were male farmers (1900: 146). Many reformers such as Rose refused to accept the notion that farm families were struggling economically nor would they accept the

notion that men refused to allocate family resources for home modernization. For example, Mary Brethour, the wife of a wealthy breeder, was also anxious to place the blame on women:

> I do hate to hear men blamed for all the inconveniences and disadvantages under which some farm women work. It is nearly always the woman's own fault, for most men can be managed if we only go the right way about it, and at the right time, and I cannot agree with the oft-repeated assertion that the farmers thinks more about his colts and calves than about his children. (163)

Still another woman stated that "women do not have up-to-date homes because of lack of means but lack of knowledge of the way to go about securing them" (Archives of Ontario 1900).

It was hoped that scientific homemaking taught through the Women's Institutes would teach farm women the importance of applying machine technology to their work in the home. Also, farm women must learn to control the amount of work they did so that city life with its "struggling, unsettled, unhappy human machines would pale into insignificance against the marked contrast of higher life in the country" (Hoodless 262).

Women's Institute speakers told women that in order for them to fulfil their important function as nation builders they must take their work as homemakers and mothers seriously and learn the scientific principles behind all aspects of domestic work. In order to do this and expand their intellectual capacities to deal with issues in the home they should "read, read, read ... we cannot hope to improve if we do not keep up our reading along the line of our present occupation" (Shields 154). Such reading material was referred to as "silent advisers," and the "best and truest guides, essential for intellectual growth and necessary [to make us] better wives and mothers" (Shields 154).

For many agrarian nationalists who wanted to see the agricultural community reformed in early twentieth century Ontario, particularly those who supported state initiatives such as the Women's Institutes, applying science to life on the farm was not a possibility to be accepted or rejected; it was absolutely necessary for the survival of national well being (Nesmith, 1984-85; 98). A systematic approach to all work done on the farm would have the impact of raising farm labour from everyday trial and error to an intellectual endeavour or "from the ... haphazard to [an] ... exact science" (Nesmith 1984-85:97). Women's Institute lecturers firmly believed that modernization was essential to a revitalized rural Ontario and the first step towards awakening national greatness. Only as farm women reduced their work and made their homes more attractive would women have the time to raise sons that would take their place as the nation's leaders. Such individuals would never emerge in an industrialized world. The city neither edified or uplifted the soul nor did they contribute to the development of strong moral character. As one woman claimed, young people who go to the city tend to be "led away from right paths and dragged down to destruction" by the influences they find there (Smith 104). Thus farm women must accept the fact their work was different that of men. As wives and mothers they had to gain an appreciation for the intellectual nature of homemaking so that valuable energy would not be wasted on work not associated with their true calling. Agricultural work and life in the countryside could only be improved when the women of the countryside understood their importance to the development of national greatness.

The men and women who first founded and then led the Women's Institutes in the early years of the twentieth century believed they were transforming Ontario's rural life. Putting forward a vision informed by agrarian nationalism, they believed that they were engaged in a struggle to assert Ontario's place within Canada. Approaching work scientifically with an intellect developed with help from the instructors at the Ontario Agricultural College could assist farmers in tackling social and economic problems as they arose. Women, however, and specifically the role they could play in the home were essential to the transformation process. Only if mothers accepted their God-given responsibilities, separate from those assigned to men, would the nation be truly great.

Margaret Kechnie, PhD, is presently Chair of the Department of Women's Studies, Laurentian University.

References

Ambrose, Linda. *For Home and Country: The Centennial History of the Women's Institutes in Ontario*. Erin, ON: Boston Mills, 1996.

Ambrose, Linda M. and Margaret Kechnie. "Social Control or Social Feminism?: Two Views of the Ontario Women's Institutes." *Agricultural History* 73 (2) (Spring 1999): 222-251.

Archives of Ontario. RG 16 Series 87 File 5.8. "Report of the Superintendent of the Farmers' Institute." 1900.

Backus, A. H., M.D. "The Effect of Home Influence upon Our National and Political Life." *Annual Report of the Women's Institutes* (1906): 73.

Bates, Mrs. J. W. "Social Rights and Duties of Farmers." *Annual Report of the Women's Institutes* (1907): 52-55.

Beck, Mrs. A. "Systematic Housekeeping." *Annual Report of the Farmers' Institutes* (1902): 47.

Bell, M. "Ventilation and Sanitation." *Annual Report of the Women's Institutes* (1905): 103-105.

Brethour, Mary. "Morning Session–November 12th." *Annual Report of the Women's Institutes* (1916): 163.

Carpenter, Mrs. T. M. "Women's Duties and Possibilities." *Annual Report of the Farmers' Institutes* (1897-98): 282.

Farm and Dairy. "Why We Left the Farm." (August 22, 1912): 870.
Farmer's Advocate. "An Unfair Comparison." (May 5,1910): 758.
Frances, Daniel. *National Dreams: Myth, Memory and Canadian History.* Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997.
Hatch, L. D. "Do Women Influence Men to Leave the Farm?" *Canadian Farm* 8 (May 1914): 5.
Hoodless, Adelaide. "Organizing in the Rural Districts." *Annual Report of the Farmers' Institutes* (1897-98): 261-262.
Jones, David C. " 'There is Some Power About the Land'—The Western Agrarian Press and Country Life Ideology." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 17 (3) (Fall 1982): 96.
Ketchnie, Margaret Christina. "Keeping Things Clean 'for Home and Country': the Federated Women's Institues of Ontario 1897-1919." PhD dissertation (Unpublished). Toronto: University of Toronto (OISE), 1996.
MacDougall, John. *Rural Life in Canada.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973. First published in 1913.
Maddock, Blanche. "The All-Round, or Ideal Woman." *Annual Report of the Women's Institutes* (1906): 142-144.
Maddock, Blanche. "Domestic Science." *Annual Report of the Farmers' Institutes* (1899-1900): 150.
Nesmith, T. "'Pen and Plough' at Ontario Agricultural College, 1894-1910." *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984-85): 94-109.
Nesmith, T. "The Philosophy of Agriculture: The Promise of the Intellect in Ontario Farming, 1835-1914." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Carleton University, 1988.
Nodwell, Mrs. R. C. "The Duties of a Mother." *Annual Report of the Women's Institutes* (1906): 85-87.
Prentice, Alison, Paula Bourne, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Beth Light, Wendy Mitchinson and Naomi Black, eds. *Canadian Women: A History.* Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988.
Rose, Laura. "A Plea for Better Dairy Equipment." *Annual Report of the Farmers' Institutes.* (1900): 146
Rose, Laura. "Economical Housekeeping." *Annual Report of the Farmers' Institutes* (1897-98): 270-272.
Rose, Laura. *Farm Dairying.* London: T. Werner Laurie, 1911.
Shields, Mrs. W. "Books—Their Place in the Farmer's Home." *Annual Report of the Farmers' Institutes* (1899-1900): 153-155.
Smith, Mrs. J. D. "Rural vs. City Life" *Annual Report of the Farmers' Institutes.* (1893): 103-105.
Valverde, Mariana. *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991.
Watson, M. U. "How the Macdonald Institute May Help the Women's Institutes." *Annual Report of the Women's Institutes* (1905a): 48-49.
Watson, M. U. "The Work of Macdonald Institute." The Annual Report of the Women's Institutes (1905b): 18-20.
Way, W. J. "Farming—the Greatest of all Callings." *Canadian Farm* 6 (October 1911): 29.

DIANA PEACOCK

In the Subway

Si on regarde les mains
des passagers sur le train
Ce sont un intrument
De bénissement

La dame, prenant sa canne
D'une façon artistique
Les adultes debout
Leurs mains pressées contre les poles
Laissant les enfants s'asseoir
Les bébés bercés, leurs ongles perçant
Les mains de leur mère
Une jeune femme assise aussi
Deux doigts sur chaque page
Cherchant sagesse
Les vieilles femmes, leur mains élargies
Tenant les sacs lourds en plastique
Bénissent l'une l'autre

Ces gens de toutes races
Sont bouleversés de temps en temps
Par le mouvement du train
Mais la fonction de leurs mains est intacte.

Diana Peacock vient de l'Ecosse. Elle a écrit la poésie pendant les années, et a publié en plusieurs journaux.